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Early childhood experience is often crucial in establishing the cognitive and affective structures of the child. In particular, the preschool experience of the lower class child establishes patterns of responsive behavior and ways of relating to the authority structure of the school which are not conducive to academic learning and prevent the child from taking full advantage of the cognitive experiences available. The influence on the child of his mother's attitudes is the subject of this study. Mothers have been grouped into two types for this study: (1) status oriented mothers, who emphasize the difference in status and power between the child and the teacher and offer compliance and docility as techniques for the child to deal with the classroom situation, and (2) the person oriented mother, who sees less distance between herself and the school and is thus less concerned with obedience and more concerned with cognitive development. The population investigated in this study was urban and rural Negro, white, and Seminole Indian families. Eight predictions were made concerning the effect of the mother's attitude on the child's performance on various cognitive tests. The data analysis is not yet complete. An appendix following the study presents a parent attitude questionnaire. (WD)

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F. Socialization into the role of pupil

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Although socialization theory has provided a useful conceptual framework for research on the emergence of affect, aggression and other forms of social behavior in children, its relevance for understanding the development of cognitive functioning has not been equally exploited.

Considering the mother as the primary socializing agent for the preschool child, the present investigators have studied the influence on educability of the ature of the relationship and modes of communication that develop between the urban Negro mother and her child. Educability is here considered not only to include the cognitive skills and modes of problem solving the child brings to the school situation but also his motivation for achievement and modes for relating to the authority figures in that situation.

In our study of the cognitive environments of urban preschool children we found that children from deprived backgrounds not only are likely to come to school without the skills needed for absorbing kindergarten or first grade work but also that their early orientation toward the school is often dysfunctional, interfering with the child's attempt to meet the school's demands and its attempts to reach and motivate him.

The effects of early experience are not only to form communication modes and cognitive structure; they also establish potential patterns of relationship with the external world. The preschool experience of the working class child develops patterns of responsive behavior and ways of relating to the authority structure of the school which often are not adaptive for academic learning and prevent him from taking advantage of

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the cognitive experiences available in the classroom. His lack of preparation is not merely a matter of level of knowle e but represents orientations to authority, the school, and the learning process that have been learned in the child's preschool experience and are constantly reinforced by his home and community environment.

The mother's mode of dealing with her child and with the school affects the educability of the child by teaching him ways of dealing with the school as a social system The images that the mother holds of the school and that are probably transmitted to the young child in some form are particularly relevant for early education and the child's success in school. Although there was considerable variability within social status groups in their responses, and a great deal of overlap between social status groups, we found that working class mothers tend to perceive the public school as an institution that is distant, competent, authoritarian, and unresponsive. This attitude may be paraphrased as follows: in contrast to middle class mothers, those from the working class believe they can do little to improve the schools; that learning is not natural, but that children must be forced to learn; that if they disagree with the school principal, there is little they can do. Their attitudes reveal the sense of futility, powerlessness, and the lack of alternate routes of action open to lower class families in their dealings with the school system. They also reveal an impression of the learning process as difficult, without intrinsic motivation, and as necessarily involving status and power pressure upon children.

In attempting to apply Bernstein's concept of status-oriented and person-oriented families to our data, we analyzed maternal responses to the question: Imagine your child is old enough to go to public school

for the first time. How would you prepare him? What would you tell him?

The status-oriented (or imperative) mother emphasizes the difference in status and power between the child and the teacher and offers compliance and docility as techniques for dealing with the classroom situation. The instructive (or person-oriented) mother sees less distance between herself and the school and thus is less concerned with obedience. She attempts to explain the school in terms of the rationale of the system (if you don't get to school on time, you won't learn as much; if you aren't quiet, you can't hear what the teacher says; the teacher is like your mother -- she wants to teach you and help you), making it possible for the child to evaluate and respond to events and demands in terms of a logic that can be applied to new situations. The imperative or status-oriented child responds to the fixed structure of the school and may be unable to adapt to more subtle or complex patterns of stimuli. For him, security lies in compliance and docility. The person or instructive-oriented child is made aware of more alternative and possibilities of interaction. His security lies in understanding <u>why</u> rules are enforced and thus, presumably, he is able to recognize situations in which rules may be suspended for other considerations. This permits him to initiate action, to anticipate response in new situations, and to explore the unfamiliar more comfortably.

If the general line of argument presented here is valid, a significant correlation should exist between the pattern of regulatory behavior by the mother and cognitive performance of the child. The effect is implicit in the description of the different control types: children of mothers who use imperative-normative control will generally perform at a lower level than children of mothers oriented toward inner, subjective

states and rationale. In addition, the relationships these children establish with adults other than their mothers, e.g., testers, teachers, will reflect the regulatory system established between the mother and child.

In our study of urban Negro mothers and their four-year-olds, we found the tendency for mothers to use imperative-normative regulatory techniques associated with the child's low performance in several areas. First, there was a significant negative correlation between imperative responses on the First Day protocols and Stanford-Binet I.Q.s. Also, mothers with high imperative scores had children who gave nonverbal responses on the Sigel Sorting Task and were unable or unwilling to offer verbal rationales for their sorts in the interaction sessions. Moreover, we found that even within the more restricted range of responses given by the low-income groups, the mother's feeling of powerlessness in dealing with the school was a significant predictor of her child's I.Q. and his behavior in the testing situation.

The present study was an attempt to replicate these findings with similar and diverse low-income populations. The subjects were the mothers or principal maternal caretakers of the children in our evaluation sample. This sample consisted of urban and rural Negro and white families, plus an additional group of Seminole Indian mothers from an urban and rural reservation.

All subjects were interviewed by E and R Center staff at the time of the administration of the OEO Parent Interview Questionnaire. The research questions followed the OEO Questionnaire and may be found in the Appendix. In the case of the Indian sample, a member from the respective reservation accompanied the interviewer in order to translate items where

necessary.

The following predictions were made concerning the low-income mother's response.

1. On the First Day Task there will be a predominant use of status-oriented messages and imperative, rather than instructive, statements. Obedience rather than learning will be stressed.
2. Distance between the school and home will be reflected in feelings of powerlessness in dealing with school personnel.
3. Despite the social changes which have occurred over the past few years, there will be considerable discrepancy between the mothers' aspirations and expectations concerning how far their children will go in school.

In addition, we expected sufficient variation within the sample on these measures to be able to make the following predictions.

4. There will be significant negative correlations between the percentage of imperative and status-oriented messages with the child's pre-Binet I.Q.
5. Both level of aspiration and expectation for her child's educational achievement will be positively associated with pre-Binet I.Q.
6. The mother's non-participation in groups, reflecting her isolation and reduced sources of indirect social stimulation for her child, will be positively associated with lower pre-Binet I.Q.s.
7. Younger age expectancies for the Winterbottom items will be positively associated with pre-Binet I.Q.s.
8. These maternal behaviors will be significantly related to the child's post-Binet I.Q. and degree of change in intelligence

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test performance. However, since these scores also reflect differences in the Head Start experiences of these youngsters, the correlations will be expected to be lower.

Since these interviews were collected in the summer, coding did not begin until the fall. All data have now been scored, checked, and put on IBM cards. Analyses of the data, however, have just begun. During the next month we will determine the extent of confirmation of the above hypotheses in addition to analyzing similarities and differences in subsample groups.

Preliminary results indicate that on the First Day Task low-income mothers from various ethnic groups tend to stress obedience rather than learning in school, and that they tend to present their children with a minimum of rationale for their expected behavior. Also, significant relationships are obtained between both the mother's level of aspiration and expectation and her child's pre- and post-Binet I.Q.s. Urban white and Negro mothers show higher mean levels of aspiration and expectation concerning how far their children will go in school. On the Winterbottom items higher mean age expectancies for the various achievement behaviors tend to be associated with lower Binet I.Q.s, but usually not to a statistically significant degree. There is considerable variation both between and within groups for these age expectancies.

These data are congruent with our argument that social class and cultural effects upon cognitive development of children can best be understood in terms of the specifics of interaction transactions between the mother and her young child, that the nature of these exchanges is influenced by the family's position in the social structure of the community and the availability of alternatives open for consideration, that maternal

behavior induces complementary learning or information-processing strategies in the child and that the child's early orientation to authority and cognitive activity facilitates or retards his ability to adopt the role of pupil when he encounters formal learning situations in the public schools.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO HEAD START E AND R CENTER
1966-67
PARENT INTERVIEW SUPPLEMENT

FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL QUESTION:

Let's just imagine that _____ is old enough to go to grade school for the first time. How do you think you would prepare him/her? What would you do or tell him/her?

(Record verbatim): Probe without giving suggestions as far as possible. If it doesn't come out spontaneously, be sure to ask "What will you tell him/her about that first day at school?"

MOTHER'S REACTION TO CHILD'S QUESTIONS:

What do you do if_____ asks you a question that you don't want to answer?

(Record verbatim)

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS:

(A) If you could have your wish, and _____ had the opportunity, how far in school would you like for (the child) to go?

(Check highest answer that applies)

1_____Finish Grade School

2_____Attend Junior High School

3_____Finish High School

4_____Take Vocational Work in High School

5_____Take Vocational Work After High School

6_____Go to College

7_____Finish College

8_____Go to Graduate School

9_____Don't Know

(B) Since things don't always turn out the way we want them, now far do you think _____ will probably or actually go in school?

(Check highest answer that applies)

1_____Finish Grade School

2_____Attend Junior High School

3_____Finish High School

4_____Take Vocational Work in High School

5_____Take Vocational Work After High School

6_____Go to College

7_____Finish College

8_____Go to Graduate School

9_____Don't Know

Difference between aspirations and expectation level (0-8)

MOTHER'S ACTIVITIES

What groups do you belong to or attend meetings?

(Write the name of the club, what the group does and how involved the subject is in the group; 1 = very active, 2 = active, 3 = member, 4 = non-member, 5 = none)

NAME OF GROUP	PURPOSE	INVOLVEMENT
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILD:

Young children are often afraid of different things. Is_____overly afraid of:

A. DARKNESS?

1.____Very often

2.____Occasionally

3.____Never

4.____Don't Know

5.____No information

B. THUNDER AND LIGHTENING?

1___Very often

2___Occasionally

3___Never

4___Don't Know

5___No information

C. HURTING HIMSELF BY FALLING?

1.____Very often

2.____Occasionally

3.____Never

4.____Don't Know

5.____No information

D. SIRENS OR OTHER LOUD NOISES?

1___Very often

2___Occasionally

3___Never

4___Don't Know

5___No information

E. DOGS?

1.____Very often

2.____Occasionally

3.____Never

4.____Don't Know

5.____No information

F. DOCTORS?

1___Very often

2___Occasionally

3___Never

4___Don't Know

5___No information

G. OTHER STRANGERS?

1.____Very often

2.____Occasionally

3.____Never

4.____Don't know

5.____No information

H. BEING SEPARATED FROM YOU?
(left with sitter, leaving for school,
1___Very often

2___Occasionally

3___Never

4___Don't Know

5___No information

AGES FOR INDEPENDENCE EXPECTATIONS:

When do you think your child will be old enough to do things like: (enter age)

1_____Undress himself and go to bed by himself?

2_____Hang up his own clothes and look after his own possessions?

3_____Make his own friends among children his own age?

4_____Eat alone without help in cutting and handling food?

5_____Do some regular tasks around the house?

6_____Stand up for his own rights with other children?

7_____Read stories alone without your help?

8_____Take part in your adult interests and conversations?

9_____Earn his own spending money?

10_____Make decisions like choosing his clothes or deciding how to spend his money by him/her self?

Then ask: Are there any of these (child) is doing now?
(Circle number of appropriate item(s) above)

EDUCATIONAL ATTITUDE SURVEY

	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Don't Know	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
1. The teachers expect the children always to obey them.					
2. The only way that people can raise the way they live is to get a good education					
3. Most teachers probably like quiet children better than active ones.					
4. The best way to improve the schools is to integrate them.					
5. I can do very little to improve the schools.					
6. The classrooms are overcrowded.					
7. What they teach the kids is out-of-date.					
8. Most teachers do not want to be bothered by parents coming to see them.					
9. Sports and games take up too much time.					
10. Kids cut up so much that teachers can't teach.					
11. Not enough time is spent learning reading, writing, and arithmetic.					
12. There are some children in the school I would not want my child to play with					

	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Don't Know	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
13. People who don't have much education enjoy life just as much as well educated people.					
14. The law should be changed so that boys and girls would have to stay in school until they completed high school.					
15. In school there are more important things than getting good grades.					
16. The best way to improve the schools is to train teachers better.					
17. Once in a while it should be OK for parents to keep their children out of school to help out at home.					
18. Teachers who are very friendly are not able to control the children.					
19. The teachers make the children doubt and question things that they are told at home.					
20. Most teachers would be good examples for my children.					
21. When children do not work hard in school, the parents are to blame.					
22. The most important quality of a real man is driving purpose to get ahead.					
23. Most kids who can do the work are able to get to college if they really want to.					

	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 Don't Know	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree
24. A man can often learn more on a job than he can in school.					
25. Most children have to be made to learn.					
26. If I disagree with the principal, there is very little I can do.					
27. Most of the teachers are not trained as well as they should be.					

1. Circle one: Sex: M (1) F (2)

2. Years of formal education completed: _____

3. Occupation of the head of your household or family (you, your husband, or your father)

_____
Title Kind of Work

4. Your age: _____

5. Do you have children in school? (circle one) Yes (1) No (2)

6. Do you have 3-6 year old children (circle one) Yes (1) No (2)

How Many _____

7. If "yes" to #6, do you plan to send him (her/them) to:

_____1. A Chicago public school

_____2. A religious school

_____3. A private school (other than religious)

_____4. Other

_____5. Don't know

NAME OF SCHOOL ADDRESS